

**TOWN OF SHEFFIELD
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 12, 2015
DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM
7:00 PM**

Board Members Present: Don Ward, Chairman
Peter Stiglin
James Collingwood, Sr.
Cheryl Blackburn

Board Members Not Present: Howard Chezar

Others Present: Jill Hughes, Clerk
Members of the public (see sign in sheet)

Chairman Don Ward called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Public Hearing: Request for Determination of Applicability filed by Massachusetts Department of Transportation for property on Route 41 (South Undermountain Road). Work will include micro-milling and resurfacing Route 41. The project area is the state highway Route 41 in Sheffield, from the Connecticut state line north to the Egremont town line.

Nick Hopkins was present to speak about the project. The existing pavement will be milled down 1.75" and new pavement will be put down, side road approaches will be adjusted to meet the new roadway surface, culverts will be cleaned out and guardrail and pavement marking work. Mr. Hopkins stated that portions of the project area are in the 100-foot Buffer Zone of several wetlands and intermittent streams, the 200-foot Riverfront Area of several perennial streams, NHESP mapped endangered species habitat and the Schenob Brook Drainage Basin, but that the work will not impact the resource areas. The existing pavement elevations will be maintained in all areas. Mass Highway is exempt from review by Natural Heritage. The start date will be sometime next summer. Mr. Hopkins informed the Commission that the Town of Egremont has already approved the project. A discussion ensued about the proposed work area and about the storage of equipment and materials.

P. Stiglin motioned, with a second from D. Ward to close the public hearing for the Request for Determination of Applicability for Mass DOT. The motion passed 4-0.

The Commission had a discussion about the proposed project. **J. Collingwood, Sr. motioned, with a second from D. Ward to issue a Negative Determination #2 and #3 for Mass DOT with the following Special Conditions:**

- 1. No heavy construction vehicles in wetlands area or associated Buffer Zone.**
- 2. Commission to be notified before the start of work and when it is completed.**

3. Members of Commission will have a site visit pre and post construction.
4. Work with the Commission to coordinate a staging area for construction equipment.

The motion passed 4-0.

Public Hearing: Notice of Intent filed by Seaboard Solar for property on Home Road for construction of (2) 1.5 MW solar arrays and (1) 0.80 MW solar array:

Michael Loin from Bertin Engineering was present for the applicant as well as a representative from Seaboard Solar. Mr. Loin explained that revised Stormwater Drainage Analysis and plans were sent to the Commission. The revised plans dated 12/22/14 have (1) 1.4 MW solar array and (1) 1.46 MW solar array on two separate lots. Mr. Loin reviewed the project and the plans with the Commission. He also noted that the Building Inspector has already reviewed the project and it is an allowed use. It was also noted that it is not a public utility, but commercial scale of private ownership. The site has been flagged. Main entry to the construction site will be at the intersection of Home Road and County Road and there will be a trucking pad for construction vehicles, which will take the mud and dirt off the tires before they enter the road. There will be a 7-foot high fencing that will be 6-inches off the ground around each solar array, so wildlife can get through. There will be three gravel driveways with gates for access to the sites once construction is completed.

Mr. Loin explained that the trees from one of the sites will be removed for the panels to be installed. There will be no change in grade. The meadow on the other site will be maintained. The arrays are placed on ground ballasted concrete tubs that posts will be put in to, so there will be no pounding noise as there will be no posts put directly in the ground. The panels are linked together in a racking system with 6-inch anchors. A discussion ensued about the project. Residents expressed their concerns about the site that was chosen as it is in the Rural District, could be disruptive to wildlife and that trees have to be taken down.

The Commission informed Mr. Loin that they will need to schedule a site visit and that they would like a third party review of the project. P. Stiglin motioned, with a second from C. Blackburn that the applicant hire a consultant of the Commission's choice to review the plans prior to their February 9, 2015 meeting. The motion passed 4-0.

A site visit was scheduled for Monday, January 26, 2015 @ 3pm. The Commission discussed contacting Michael Kulig at Berkshire Engineering to do the third party review. The Commission's secretary will get in touch with Mr. Kulig.

C. Blackburn motioned, with a second from J. Collingwood to continue the public hearing to February 9, 2015 @ 7pm. The motion passed 4-0.

Continuation of Public Hearing Notice of Intent application from Kenneth Westlake, for property on North Main Street (Route 7). The proposed project consists of a 150kw photovoltaic ground mounted solar array: The Commission received an email from the applicant's representative Ethan Archundia asking for a continuation as the third party review is not ready. J. Collingwood motioned, with a second from C. Blackburn to continue the public hearing to February 9, 2015 @ 7pm. The motion passed 4-0.

Bundling of Municipal Highway and Road Maintenance Projects in a single Notice of Intent: Chairman Ward tabled the discussion to a future meeting.

Minutes: The Commission reviewed draft minutes from their December 8, 2014 meeting. *J. Collingwood motioned, with a second from P. Stiglin to accept the minutes of December 8, 2014 as written. The motion passed 4-0.*

Bills Pending: The Commission approved and signed a bills payable for a legal notice that was placed in the Berkshire Record.

Upcoming Conferences and Mail: The Commission reviewed and discussed their budget for Fiscal Year 2016. *C. Blackburn motioned, with a second from D. Ward to approve their budget of \$4,680.00 for Fiscal Year 2016. The motion passed 4-0.*

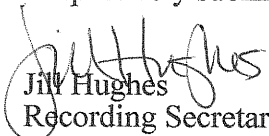
The Commission received a Forest Cutting Plan for the McMennamin property.

Adjournment: There being no further business before the Commission this evening, *C. Blackburn motioned, with a second from P. Stiglin to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 4-0.*

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm.

The following documents were reviewed during the Board's meeting and have been retained as required by the Massachusetts Public Retention Policy: Meeting Agenda, Sign in sheet, RDA application from Mass DOT, NOI application from Bertin Engineering, NOI application from Kenneth Westlake, Draft meeting minutes from 12/8/14, Budget info FY2016, Bill from the Berkshire Record, Forest cutting plan for McMennamin.

Respectively submitted by:


Jill Hughes
Recording Secretary